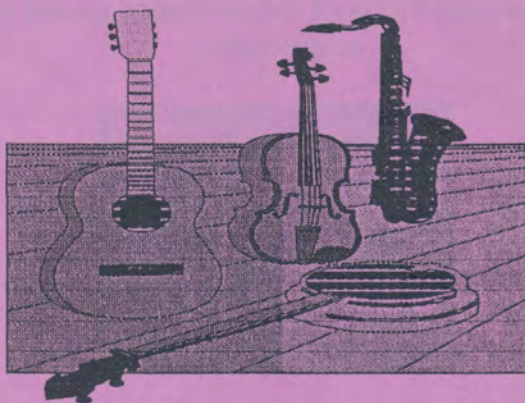


JULY 1996

OPEN ARMS

VOL. 8 NUMBER 7

..... MICHIANA'S LESBIAN NEWSLETTER



National Women's Music Festival

I recently returned from an exciting weekend. I attended the National Women's Music Festival in Bloomington, IN. It was filled with music/entertainment, over 300 workshops, sporting activities (volleyball, golf, "a run", softball, etc.) and free child care. The workshops were well-presented and very informative.

There were women of all ages, colors and styles. It was truly a celebration of diversity. I felt strongly validated by these surroundings. I was not alone in my life style choice. This feeling was and is so important to my "day-to-day" living.

This four day experience was reasonably priced. Bloomington is not as rustic or as private as the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. Each offers a different type of opportunity. I will definitely attend Bloomington again. The next festival is approximately May 28th, 1997. I would love to see more Michiana sisters there.

NOTICE

The masthead contest finalists are located on page 4 in this newsletter. The staff would like you, the subscriber, to help us with the final decision as this is your newsletter. Please send us a postcard with your selection of one of the five finalists. Please send your postcard to: Open Arms P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, Ind. 46546 As we would like to announce the winner in the August newsletter, please send your postcard no later than July 24.

Memory is the faculty that reminds you that you've probably forgotten something

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OPEN ARMS DEADLINE/MEETING

The deadline for submissions for the August newsletter is July 20th. Submissions received after July 20th may not be published in the July newsletter. Mail submissions to *Open Arms*, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546 or give to any staff member.

Newsletter Meeting July 14, 6:30 p.m. For information 271-0338

COMMUNITY EVENTS

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday

7-9 p.m.

For info, write:

LSG

P.O. Box 1612

Mishawaka, IN 46544

Lavender Rhythm Dance

August 24th, 1996

Pickwick Place

219 N. 4th St., Niles

8:00 p.m. to 1:00a.m. (IN time)

\$7.00 admission at the door

Womyn only, smoking room inside, BYOB

EVENTS COORDINATORS

Third Friday Out: Sherrill and Lori 684-6913

OPEN ARMS STAFF

Suze (219)-272-3477

Kaye & Marcia (219)-271-0338

Advertising: Kaye & Marcia

Subscriptions: Kaye & Marcia

EDITORIAL POLICY

We may edit any article submitted for length or content. We ask that all articles submitted be signed and typed, but will respect the wishes of the author by not printing her name if so requested.

PLEASE TYPE SUBMISSIONS IF POSSIBLE

If it is possible for you to type your submissions on a letter quality typewriter or printer, please do so using a 55 space line. This will make layout much easier.

Thanks.

MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

August 13-18

UP AND COMING EVENTS

Olivia Cruises

October, 1996 Sonora Bay: Club Med Resort

call 1-800-631-6277 for information

THIRD THURSDAY OUT

"Fun at Coveleski Stadium"

The game begins at 7:00 p.m. (IN time), meet at the Main gate at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jul. 18th

Tickets are \$4.00 - \$5.00

Call Sherrill and/or Lori by Tuesday, Jul. 16th for reservations at 684-6913.

All suggestions of future places would be appreciated.



CANOE TRIP

(This is great fun!)

July 20th, 1996 at 10a.m. (IN time)

Meet at St. Pat's park

Approximate cost is \$10.00 per person

Plan on 2 people per canoe

RSVP by July 18th to Lori and/or Sherrill at 684-6913



1996 Whistle Stop Cafe Schedule

Jul. 5	Crop Fire Protection	7:15
Jul. 12	IUSB	6:30
Jul. 19	Rose	6:30
Jul. 26	Simeri's	6:30
Aug. 2	Martins	6:30

Call Cityline each week for location of that week's game

674-0900 ext. 2233 or 1-800-830-2489 ext 2233.



THE INVISIBLE LESBIAN

BY LEE LYNCH

Sometimes, in this figurative Kansas that constitutes Lesbian Nation, I get the feeling I'm not in Kansas any more. When I see lesbians in the limelight I wonder, what is this tattoo craze? Since when did gender issues outrank femme/butch? How come dykes do things to their hair that I associate with queer-hating adolescent boys?

I suspect that the problem of lesbian invisibility has not been resolved by lesbian chic. That the media image of Everydyke is far from a mirror reflection. And that what may be this week's rage in the lesbian ghettos loses momentum as its shock waves reverberate to where most lesbians live.

The truth is, most lesbians are still invisible- - and like it that way.

The invisible lesbian is the librarian who won't meet another dyke's eyes to check out Martina's new mystery. The invisible lesbian is the scruffy gas station attendant who turns out to be a girl. The lesbian who goes back to live with her parents because that's the only way she can afford to fight her breast cancer. The women who stay married to men and make love with their best friends while the kids are at school. The quiet couples, one a nurse, one a bookkeeper, who only socialize with their straight neighbors.

Aren't these women lesbians too?

Some dykes actually cringe at the sight of body piercing. Their tastes in leather run to purses or billfolds, pumps or Birkenstocks. Sex clubs are an alien concept. Personal ads scare them.

Rather than nude posters on their walls, many lesbians tack up cute puppy pictures and , if it feels safe, their favorite "Dykes to Watch Out For" cartoon- - though some don't even relate to the word dyke.

They may be moved by flirtatious femmes, but the butches clam up within a yard of one. Cuddling is a fine form of foreplay as far as they're concerned and campfire smoke the most potent aphrodisiac they've ever used. Some dare to buy lesbian videos, but many get all romantic just singing Girl Scout songs. Sex toy demonstrations aren't cup of tea.

Lesbians can even be prudes.

Despite the radical right hysteria about gay marriage, lot of lesbians wouldn't think of it. On anniversaries they celebrate with ice cream sundaes.

Even if they're an hour's drive from lively dyke scenes, try to pry them from their horses, bridge groups or bowling tournaments. A Valentine's Day dance? The music's too loud, and the dance starts too late or they can't get a sitter. They'd rather watch Star Trek. Any generation.

Lots of us are in the slow lane.

They're as likely to be at an environmental demonstration as a queer one. To donate money or time to animal rights as gay rights. To vote Republican as Democratic- - or not to vote at all.

Leather and lace may be the fabrics of choice for many dykes, but many more wear flannel shirts brought for two bucks apiece on clearance at Walmart with jeans, the ones that were a really-really relaxed fit even before relaxed was in.

Do they get to be dykes even if they wear dorky clip-on sunglasses? If they've got about as much desire to go on an Olivia cruise as they have to go to war? If they never learned line dancing and outdoor music festivals exhaust them? Yep, they count.

What about those who spend Friday nights clipping Safeway double coupons? And Sunday afternoons, after church, sealing their foundations to stop the skunks from settling under their houses? Who work their butts off to keep their jobs and health insurance and to pay off their Fords'

Can they keep their dyke cards?

The invisible lesbian may have no tattoos, no causes, no gay community. She may not even have a lover.

But she's loved a woman somewhere, some time. She's a lesbian.



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OPEN *Arms*

June 1996 • Vol 11 Number 1

P.O. Box 846 Mishawaka, IN 46546

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OPEN ARMS

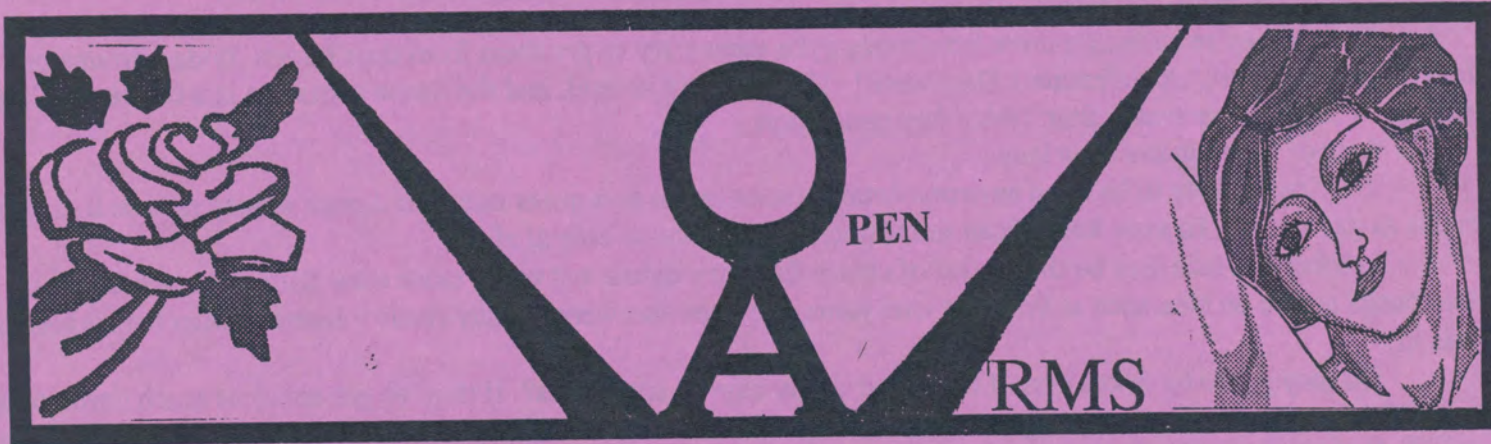
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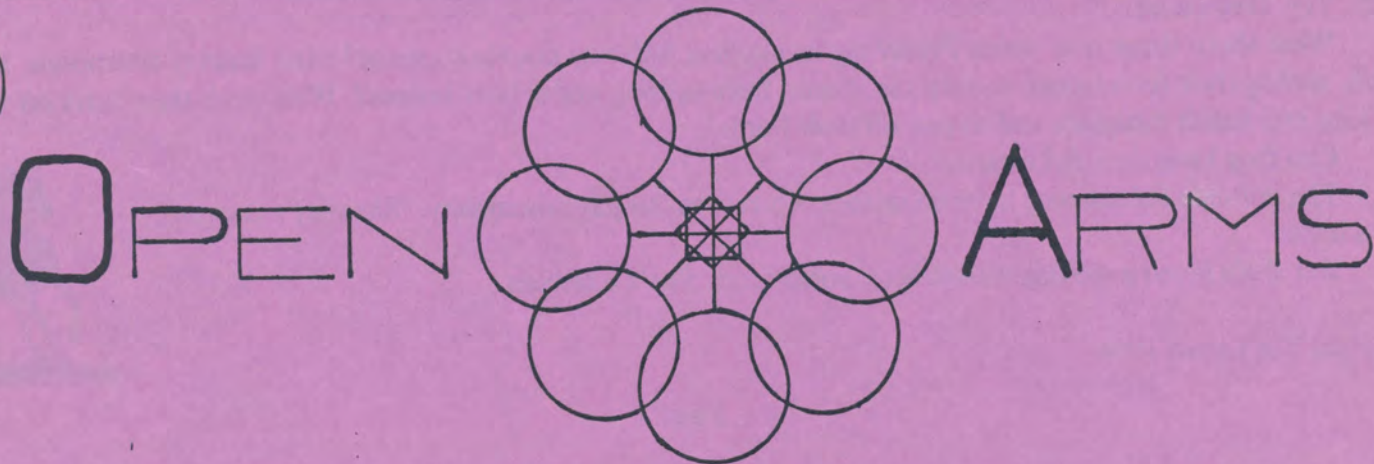
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④



⑤



Dear Egeria,

I feel sad and confused. My mother knows about me and says she loves me. She says she's proud of me, but she also says she can not accept my being a lesbian. Last week she asked if it was O.K. with me if she prayed for me, to save me, so that I'll one day be with her in the "Kingdom". (I felt offended, angry, sick, and sad.) I told her to go ahead and do whatever she felt she needed to do, but I left her feeling so very sad. I feel that I'm never good enough for her or "right". I know that I must be myself, but it still hurts. Can you help?

Dear Lovable,

I assume you have been aware of your mother's spiritual beliefs for some time. It's apparent you dislike her ideals on the subject of homosexuality, but do you love her, regardless?

She stated, she loves you and is proud of you! Additionally, she wants you beside her for all eternity in the "Kingdom". She actually expressed these tremendous feelings for you, but you wanted more. You wanted her to change, and you wanted total acceptance. On the basis of a single word, "accept", every positive feeling she expressed was downplayed in your perception, and the negative became the focus. You took that single negative comment and beat yourself up with it. Inside, you thus felt rejected totally and not loved via the thought, "I'm never good enough for her".

Is it possible to love someone who isn't exactly like you? If the answer is "no", then love and acceptance do not exist in anyone. Are parents always thrilled with their children's behaviors, appearances and other choices? Does that mean they then stop loving their child?

Teachers teach what they were taught. Wrong or right, their perception and lesson is believed by the trusting child and carried on by the coming teacher. For many years, students believed the earth was flat, and sailors feared if they sailed their ships beyond the horizon they would fall off the edge of the planet. Later, a human discovered the earth was round, and another discovered gravity, and they told the people, go ahead and sail beyond the horizon, you will not fall. Fearfully, the people laughed and scorned at the teachers with the new ideas, and they failed to accept and discover what was always there for them. A few brave souls sailed

beyond and returned safely to share their news. Gradually, it finally was accepted, yes, the earth is round.

Today, if we really examine our planet, we will see, it is NOT ROUND ! It is bumpy, lumpy, and imperfect, like our selves and our lives. If we filled in smoothed and rounded all of the earth's imperfections, life, as we know it, would cease. There would be no oceans, lakes, trees, hillsides and valleys. There would be no people! So we must live with the bumps and lumps even though we may dislike some of them, and learn about them, so we do not fall into painful pits. We could hate and reject the whole planet because of our perceptions of its imperfection, or simply care for and love its beauty and enjoy all it has to offer, even the bumpy parts!

The earth is like her people: It's a matter of our courage, perception and acceptance to enjoy what we have and also to learn from and accept what others may offer to share with us.

Lovable, your mother loves the child she carried and gave birth to! She is proud of you and what you have done with your life! She wants the best for you as she sees it, now and in the future, and that is what she is praying for. Her beliefs and fears were taught to her and in many ways, they have filled her life as she has needed, and she is comfortable and at peace as she is. She has chosen not to sail beyond the horizons and that's O.K. for her.

Can you understand her? Can you accept the fact that she was totally honest with you? Can you accept her love? Most of all, can you accept HER, as she is and still love HER? Must SHE change, to be good enough for YOU, because you are already good enough. It's simply a matter of how you choose to perceive EVERYTHING!

I suggest you give yourself and your mother a giant hug!! Sail your ship!

Love,
Egeria

If you would like to talk to Egeria, you may write to her at the following:

**Egeria
P.O. Box 1281
Niles, MI 49120**

(You will remain anonymous.)



COURT OF FRIENDS

SINGLES

O.K. all you singles! Here's your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you, what you are looking for in another (be brief), and send to:

**The Court of Friends
P.O.Box 1281
Niles, MI 49120**

(Be sure to include your address.)

Your identity will be assigned an ID number. Your info and ID number will be published in OPEN ARMS. (It would be helpful if you would send your info early in the month so that it can be published in the next month's issue.) Also, O.A. reserves the right to edit, if necessary, for publication.

Those wishing to respond to an ID Single may do so by writing whatever you wish, putting it in a stamped, sealed envelope with the intended ID number on the front (in pencil). Place your message in another stamped envelope and mail to the above P.O.Box.

Upon receiving your message, the ID number will be replaced with the corresponding name and address and mailed. Then you're on your own. **COME ON SINGLES!** *Someone special wants to know you're out there!*

53 Hey lady, you got the love I need. Maybe more than enough. I'm lonely, but happy. 26, blond, 5'2", blue eyes, 140 lbs, labor carpenter. Love kids, animals, flowers, music and women. Play guitar, drive my car, camping, fishing, party down. No drugies or bi-sexual. Lonely? Write Me!



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Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community.



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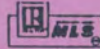


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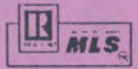
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July

1996

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1	2 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	3	4 	5	6
7	8	9 Birthday wishes to: LINDA S. Support Group 7:00 p.m.	10	11	12	13
14 OPEN ARMS MEETING 6:30 P.M.	15	16 Support Group 7:00 p.m. Reservations Due for 3rd Thursday Out	17 Happy Birthday to BARBARA J. LU B., & S. FULLER	18 Best Wishes, JEAN	19	20 CANOE TRIP 10:00a.m.
21	22	23 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	24	25	26	27 Birthday wishes to: DEB W.
28 Happy Birthday LORRAINE B.	29 Birthday Wishes to: TAMMY O.	30 Support Group 7:00 p.m.	31 Happy Birthday LINDA Y.			